

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of, claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method for ~~enabling a financial service provider to provide~~ providing an annuity to at least one investor comprising the steps of:
 - offering said an annuity to said at least one investor, wherein a said financial service provider charges a periodic fee over a predetermined period to said investor for said annuity;
 - determining a value for said annuity at the end of said period;
 - declaring a periodic dividend for said annuity;
 - subtracting said periodic fee from said periodic dividend; and
 - calculating a new value for said annuity.
2. (original) The method of claim 1, wherein said periodic dividend is at least as large as a maximum periodic fee charged by said financial service provider.
3. (previously amended) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of reinvesting any remaining periodic dividend back into said annuity.
4. (previously amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said annuity is comprised of individual units, each unit having an equal value and said dividend is declared on a per unit basis.
5. (previously amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said annuity is a variable annuity.

6. (previously amended) A method of providing an annuity to a plurality of investors comprising the steps of:

determining a record date value of the annuity at an end of a predetermined period;

declaring a dividend of a predetermined amount based upon the record date value;

determining a pre-dividend value of the annuity on a dividend pay date;

calculating a pay date value of the annuity by subtracting said dividend from said pre-dividend value;

subtracting a fee from said dividend on the pay date;

reinvesting any remaining dividend into said annuity at said pay date value; and

calculating a post dividend value of said annuity.

7. (previously amended) The method of claim 6, wherein said annuity is comprised of individual units each having an equal value and said record date value is the value of each individual unit of said annuity.

8. (previously amended) The method of claim 6, wherein said annuity includes at least one optional benefit and said fee is charged to each investor based upon the optional benefits selected by the individual investor.

9. (original) The method of claim 8, wherein said dividend is larger than said fee.

10. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein said record date and said pay date are two consecutive days toward the end of the month.

11. (withdrawn)

12. (deleted)

13. – 19. (withdrawn)

20. (currently amended) An annuity product provided for a plurality of investors comprising, one or more annuity units wherein at least a portion of a the fee charged in association with the annuity product is deducted from a dividend periodically declared for each annuity unit.

21. (previously amended) An annuity product in accordance with claim 20, said product additionally comprising one or more optional benefits that can be selected by an investor, wherein an option fee charged for the annuity unit varies depending upon the optional benefits selected by the investor, and wherein the option fee is deducted from a dividend declared for each annuity unit.

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